

## Worth the Wait

*Foreword By Geetanjali and Review by Deepti Datt | republicofbrown.com*

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A few years ago I saw a movie at a film festival that I loved. I wanted to recommend it to everyone I knew, but there was no where for them to see it. It had come and gone. I never forgot this film. It stood out to me because not only did I love it, but my kids loved it too. My American born children found a little film out of India to be funny, engaging and endearing. They saw themselves in this film and it made them happy.

Fast forward several years later and I can now happily recommend this film and a place for you to watch it. Republic of Brown is proud to bring you Sooni Taraporevala's directoral debut, LITTLE ZIZOU now on HULU.

Check out our complete review below the movie. You'll be tempted to press play

<http://www.hulu.com/watch/450252>

Geetanjali

### **Review by Deepti Datt**

Sooni Taraporevala's screenwriting credits include SALAAM BOMBAY, THE NAMESAKE, MISSISSIPPI MASALA and SUCH A LONG JOURNEY amongst a formidable list of others. Taraporevala's directorial debut LITTLE ZIZOU has been likened to 'Almodovar does Bombay'. Her photography exhibition "PARSIS" has toured Harvard and is now showing at Chemould Prescott, one of the maximum city's most respected galleries. A listing of her ongoing accomplishments would require more than the space of this review – suffice it to say, Sooni Taraporevala is the quintessential renaissance woman. And the best part of it all is that she is not even trying – in fact, upon the slightest engagement with the laid-back, South Bombay film-maker, it is clear to see she's just having a great time doing what she loves.

LITTLE ZIZOU is the poignant story of a boy who dreams of meeting his idol Zinedine Zidane. LITTLE ZIZOU is also a tale of broken families braving through on love and good intentions. And LITTLE ZIZOU is a film about the old Parsi community, in a crumbling, beloved city that was called Bombay. It is this multiplicity of narratives that compelled the writer to become director.

From Taraporevala, "I started with the script after I returned from the NAMESAKE shoot in Calcutta. And the nature of the script was such that I felt only I could direct it. It follows no rules of

screenwriting. Besides feeling like I knew the characters and story and milieu better than anybody else would, I also felt somebody else might want to cut the multiple story strands and only focus on one – like the father-son conflict for example. So to preserve my whacky vision I plucked up the courage and the confidence to direct at the ripe old age of 50!”

The comparison to Pedro Almodovar’s films holds. As with the Spanish director’s incredible paeans to the lunatic fringe of his Madrid, LITTLE ZIZOU is a labor of love depicting an older, warmer, funnier, and gentler way of life that Mumbai’s bender into modernity has nearly wiped out. Taraporevala’s film, amongst a handful in the recent past, is finally also a little gem to fill the gaping lacuna of Bollywood’s own glittering bender into spontaneously combustible, reality-suspended, supernova. With LITTLE ZIZOU we see a little of the real, the visceral, the bougainvillea-spilling-moss-grown-stone-walls and mundane uniqueness of life in a Parsi neighborhood – albeit steeped in riotously comical dogma.

That is exactly the point the old-school bohemian filmmaker intends and achieves. “The back story is that a lot was going on in the world with religious fundamentalism, and I wanted to address that within my own community. And I wanted to do it with humor. Once I began writing however, the polemic receded to the background as the characters took over. So yes it’s a very local tale but hopefully also addresses a more universal issue.” says Taraporevala.

When a film translates across cultures and boundaries, as Almodovar’s do, they say “it’s got legs” – LITTLE ZIZOU has got itself a nice set of gams. This is a film, it seems, that was not in a rush either to be made, released, seen or ‘return on its roi’ – rather, Sooni Taraporevala is a filmmaker on a languid slow-burn to her craft, and LITTLE ZIZOU bound for Almodovar-esque cult-status when it’s legs have carried it across to cinema-lovers around the world.